

On the Uses of the Words “Will” and “Inhuman” in D.H. Lawrence : a Study of *The Woman Who Rode Away* and *The Princess* (Part I)

Akiko Yamada

【日本語要旨】

D.H. ロレンスが作品中で用いている “will” と “inhuman” の二語の意味は、通常の意味、すなわち辞書に載っている意味とは異なった、彼独自の意味を込めて用いられていることが多い。OED に拠れば、“will” の基本的な意味は「強制されたり偶然によってではなくて、何かをしたいという欲求」である。このように “will” という語にはなんらの否定的な意味は含まれていない。しかしロレンスはこの語に否定的な意味を与えて用いることが多い。つまり彼は “will” を「権力」や「貪欲」と結びつけて用いることが多いのである。一方で、“inhuman” の基本的な意味は『人間が持つべき当然の感情、つまり優しさや憐れみを持っていない』こと。『残忍な』、『残酷な』という意味』であるとしている。しかるにロレンスはこの語に肯定的な意味を与えて用いることが多い。それは「貪欲でない」、「自然や宇宙と結びついている」という意味である。彼はなぜこのような特別な意味をこれら二語に与えて作品を書いているのであろうか。

筆者は、本論において、これら二語の使用法がロレンスの思想と深く結びついていることを、短編小説『馬に乗って去った女』と中編小説『王女様』を分析することによって検証したいと思う。この主題は、これま

で他の研究者によって十分に解明されていないと思われるからである。これら二作品は1924年、ほとんど同じ時期に書かれ、1925年、同じ頃に雑誌に発表された。二作品はアメリカのニューメキシコ州で書かれたのだが、そこでロレンスはインディアンや土着のメキシコ人と知り合い、彼らの生き方に非常に影響を受けた。『馬に乗って去った女』と『王女様』の両方が、白人女性とインディアンや土着のメキシコ人の子孫との関わりを描いている。ロレンスは、白人の持っている「意志」(“will”)の恐ろしさを描いてそれからの救いをインディアンの生活様式に見出そうとしていると思われる。今回の論文では、長さに制限があるため、『馬に乗って去った女』のみを扱っている。次号で『王女様』論を掲載する予定である。

Introduction

In many cases, D.H. Lawrence's terms “will” and “inhuman” have meanings original to his works which are different from the ordinary ones. We usually consider “will” has a good meaning as in the proverb “Where there is a will, there is a way.” In this proverb “will” represents a resolution to accomplish something, and we praise the person who has a will. In the *OED* the first meaning of “will” is “1.1.a. Desire, wish, longing; liking, inclination, disposition (to do something),” and then it means “b. An inclination to do something, as contrasted with power or opportunity.” (*OED* XX 340) Judging from the *OED*, “will” doesn't have any bad meanings. But Lawrence sometimes uses the word “will” in connection with the words “power” or “avarice.” On the other hand the term “inhuman” gives us a bad feeling because it usually means cold and cruel. In the *OED*, the first meaning of “inhuman” is “1. Of persons: Not having the qualities proper or natural to a human being; esp. destitute of natural

kindness or pity; brutal, unfeeling, cruel." (*OED* VII 973) But Lawrence gives this word a good meaning, that is, "not having avarice" or "not having greed." Why does Lawrence give these words his own special meanings?

In this thesis I will show how these two terms have a close relationship to Lawrence's thought, reading carefully his short story *The Woman Who Rode Away* and his short novel *The Princess*. As far as I know this theme has not been researched by other scholars. Both works were written and published at almost the same time, written in 1924 and published in magazines in 1925. Lawrence traveled from Europe to America and Mexico via Ceylon and Australia. He arrived in San Francisco in 1922 and then traveled to Santa Fe and Taos in New Mexico, arriving in Mexico City in 1923. After returning to and staying in England from December 1923 to January 1924, he went back to Taos in March 1924. *The Woman Who Rode Away* and *The Princess* were written in New Mexico. Lawrence hated white man's mechanized civilization which had made human beings into machines, and traveled around the world to seek new life which could help human beings revive. He thought he had found it among some of the Indians and native Mexicans.

In both *The Woman Who Rode Away* and *The Princess* the theme is the relationship between the white woman and the native Indians or the white descendants. The relationship between the white man's world and the natives' world is depicted in the short story and the short novel. Lawrence describes the horror of the white man's or woman's will and seems to find the rescue from it in the values of the Indians' life style and religion.

I will discuss *The Woman Who Rode Away* in chapter I and *The Princess* in chapter II. As the length of the paper is limited, I will write about *The Woman who Rode Away* in this paper and in the next number of the magazine will write about *The Princess*.

1. The Mechanized Modern World and "Will"

First, I would like to examine the meaning of the term "will" as used by Lawrence, looking at passages in *Women in Love* where concerning the term is used. *Women in Love* was begun in 1916 during World War 1, and finally published in 1920. One of the protagonists, Gerald Crich is an industrial magnate, who has much money and a will to power. He torments his horse when a train is approaching the signal. The horse tries to move backwards as it fears the train but he does not let it do this. In another passage, he hits a rabbit very hard so that it is silenced by his stroke. Thus Gerald, who is a representative of modern white man's mechanical civilization, is depicted as an enemy of the natural animal world. Finally he dies in the white world of snow at Innsbruck which is depicted as the center of white man's civilization, that is the Navel of the World. The death of Gerald represents Lawrence's feelings towards civilization. Clifford Chatterley is another men of power, too and at the end of the novel he looks like an idiot. Lawrence also speaks his hate towards humanity because as Gerald shows, humanity is the mass will to power which destroys the natural world. As a result, he depicts "will" and "humanity" as corrupted things.

Birkin looked at the land, at the evening, and was thinking: "Well, if mankind is destroyed, if our race is destroyed like Sodom, and there is this beautiful evening with luminous land and trees, I am satisfied. That which informs it all is there, and can never be lost. After all, what is mankind but just one expression of the incomprehensible. And if mankind passes away,

it will only mean that this particular expression is completed and done. That which is expressed, and that which is to be expressed, cannot be diminished. There it is, in the shining evening. Let mankind pass away—time it did. The creative utterances will not cease, they will only be there. Humanity doesn't embody the utterance of the incomprehensible any more. Humanity is a dead letter. There will be a new embodiment, in a new way. Let humanity disappear as quick as possible." (WL 59)

Birkin, another protagonist of the novel, is angry at the situation which human beings are in because they are full of falsehood, and he hates mankind. But Birkin, a spokesman of Lawrence, wants to rescue them by all means. So he states that he wants them to recognize in what situation they are.

There are two streams of criticisms of *The Woman Who Rode Away*, adverse criticism and favorable criticism. J.C. Cowan puts it like this.

Most unfavorable comments on *The Woman Who Rode Away* comes from critics who, like West, take the story literally. Calling the story a fable has, I think, the advantage of recognizing Lawrence's emphasis on the ritualistic rather than the realistic aspects of the story. Perhaps the critical confusion about *The Woman Who Rode Away* can be resolved by examining the myths, rituals, and ideas that Lawrence fuses into a single religious metaphor. (Cowan 71)

Cowan examines the several different mythologies in the story, and his criticism is favorable.

The purpose of the woman's sacrifice, as she learns, has to do with the regeneration of the world. According to the Indians' myth of creation, the sun as male principle and the moon as female principle, in their world-generative cosmic intercourse, parallel the creative function of instinctual sexuality in man: (Cowan 73)

F.R. Leavis and G. Hough are also favorable to the story.

As to the adverse criticisms, there are the feminist ones of which Kate Millett's and Laurence Steven's are typical. Millett states in *D.H.Lawrence* edited by Widdowson

She is clearly a woman who needs to run away--- to something. What is curious is what Lawrence finds for her to run away to—a death which is astounding in sadism and malice with which it is conceived. (Widdowson 80)

And Steven states in *D.H.Lawrence:Critical Assessment* edited by DeZordo

Critics such as F.R. Leavis, Graham Hough, John Vickery, L.D. Clark, and James C. Cowan this sacrifice will allow a vital connection with the cosmos to be manifested. On the other hand, R.P. Draper, Kate Millet, and David Cavitch are appalled by what they see as the exploitation and murder of the woman. For them, Lawrence's 'fable' is a smokescreen which allows him to vent his hatred of women. (DeZordo 533)

My point of view is a favorable one. Lawrence accuses people who are full of will. Those people include not only women but also men, for example

Gerald Crich and Clifford Chatterley. The former dies and the latter is crippled. So Lawrence does not only handle women badly. As for the style, I don't find fables inferior to realistic novels which are also products of imagination. We can not say that *Divine Comedy* by Dante or *Paradise Lost* by Milton are not artistic, though they are depicted very unrealistically. The point is not whether the story or novel is realistic or not. The theme and art are the most important things, I think.

In *The Woman Who Rode Away* the woman's husband is another version of Gerald Crich because he is not magical to the woman when she got married to the husband named Lederman. But the circumstances only he is in are mysterious to the woman, and she is attracted by him at first. His work is to dig silver in the Sierra Madre in Mexico. He earns much money but the result doesn't make the wife happy. The husband is also very jealous, depriving the wife of her freedom. She is, as it were, in a slave state, that is, living death in life. Lawrence's aim is to depict her escape from this death in life to real life. Her husband's will to get money and to become rich results in the wife's unhappiness. Lawrence says that too much will leads to power over other persons and the desire to possess them. This is what is wrong in Lawrence's idea of the happiness of human beings. He thinks a man and a woman should connect like "two single equal stars balanced in conjunction—" (WL 151). But in *The Woman Who Rode Away* the relationship between the woman and the husband lacks this balance. The place they live in is "this shut-in flowered patio" (GSNS 756). Lawrence hates shut-in places because they rob people of the sense of freedom. And the woman sees "the huge cone of silver-mud refuse, and the machinery of extracting plant against heaven above" (GSNS 756) in the open places outside her house. These scenery gives the readers bleak and lonely feelings. Besides the scenery shows that it is against our natural way of

life, for it is "against heaven above." The circumstances which enclose the woman presents symbolically her husband himself. "He was a squeamish waif of an idealist, and really hated the physical side of life." (GSNS 757) Lawrence wrote a letter to E. Collings in which he tells as follows:

My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But what our blood feels and believes and says, is always true.... I'm like Carlyle, who, they say, wrote 50 volumes on the value of silence. (*Letters* III 503)

As mentioned above, Lawrence thinks that blood and flesh are the most important things, but Lederman is depicted as "like wire" and that he "was a squeamish waif of an idealist, and really hated the physical side of life" (GSNS 757) just tells us that he lacks "blood and flesh." So although he is a married man, Lawrence tells us that he is still "a bachelor." It means that for the husband marriage is one of his works, that is his wife is not a human being but a thing. As a result "her conscious development had stopped mysteriously with her marriage, completely arrested." (GSNS 757) Lawrence, naturally thinks she is unhappy and so makes her try to seek freer life. As with Connie in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the woman's nerves "began to go wrong ." (GSNS 757) The woman has no name and we can think of her as another Connie or another Juliet in *Sun* in this point. Both Clifford Chatterley and Lederman and also Maurice lack blood and flesh. But these persons have strong will and it is possible for them to earn much money. In this way, will means the power of the white man, but it can leads to a big catastrophe for other people.

As I mentioned above, Lederman's world represents the white man's mechanical civilization and his wife called "the woman" needs to escape this

lifeless world. The woman hears from one of the gentlemen who visits her husband about the wild Indians among the hills and mountains. He tells her they have old, old religions and mysteries. Wearied of modern white civilization, she is charmed by this talk.

And this peculiar vague enthusiasm for unknown Indians found a full echo in the woman's heart. She was overcome by a foolish romanticism more unreal than a girl's. She felt it was her destiny to wander into the secret haunts of these timeless, mysterious, marvelous Indians of the mountains. (GSNS 759)

This Indian tribe is supposed to be the Chilchuis.

There was supposed to be one tribe, the Chilchius, living in a high valley to the south, who were the sacred tribe of all the Indians. The descendants of Montezuma and the old Aztec or Totonac kings still lived among them, and the old priests still kept up the ancient religion, and offered human sacrifices—so it was said. (GSNS 759)

Her idea to visit the Indians is described as "a foolish romanticism more unreal than a girl's" and the woman is thirty-three years old. How is the adult educated woman able to believe in the presence of such Indians? She seems to be so tired of modern civilization that she is reaching for a straw as she drowns in it. Lawrence doesn't think she is foolish literally, but he describes the situation objectively from the readers' point of view.

2. The "Inhuman" Natural World and the Indians

It is important to notice that Lawrence presents the Indians as a sacred tribe. In his thinking, modern civilization is a mass of avarice which has been brought about by the will of human beings. The will demands power over other people, and so men want to control and possess women and in turn women want to control men. This relationships often lack balance. Lawrence thought that the star equilibrium was the balance between men and women. The woman who rode away is controlled by her husband and wants freedom. " ...and she dreamed of being free as she had been as a girl, among the hills of California." (GSNS 760) She was even happy to be alone.

Curious that she was neither afraid nor lonely. Indeed, the loneliness was like a drink of cold water to one who is very thirsty. And a strange elation sustained her from within. (GSNS 761)

So she goes out into the Indians' village where a religion different from the Christianity of the white people is believed in. The Indians' world can be said to be black because their eyes are black and hair is black, and skin is brown.

"Where do you come from?" the same man asked. It was always the one man who spoke. He was young, with quick, large, bright black eyes that glanced sideways at her. He had a soft black moustache on his dark face, and a sparse tuft beard, loose hairs on his chin. His long black hair, full of life, hung unstrained on his shoulders. Dark as he was, he did not look as if he had washed lately. (GSNS 763)

As pointed out above, their darkness is emphasized. It contrasts with the whiteness of white men. Besides, the Indian's eyes are "inhuman" (GSNS 763).

This means the Indians are separated from white men's humanity. Lawrence hated humanity. His hate began when he was writing *Women in Love*. And this hate continued during his writing in America and Mexico. Humanity means love in the Christian world of white men's civilization. Lawrence had come to dislike the God of love and wanted Gods of fear instead. This idea is found in *Women in Love* and is developed in *Aaron's Rod*, *Kangaroo* and *The Plumed Serpent*. *The Woman Who Rode Away* was written almost at the same time as those three novels, and contains the same idea. Again and again the Indians have an "inhuman" appearance. So the woman is not sexually a woman, but just "some giant, female ant." (GSNS 767)

The Indians are often connected with animals. They are depicted dancing, wearing fox-furs and headdresses of feathers and sea-shells. Thus Lawrence shows the Indians connected closely with natural world.

It means they are free from self-consciousness, that is, will. They live among mountains, which are separated from civilization, and where wild animals live.

She heard the strange wailing shriek of a mountain-lion, ant the answer of dogs. But she sat by her small camp fire in a secret hollow place and was not really afraid. She was buoyed up always by the curious, bubbling elation within her. (GSNS 761)

Strangeness, secrecy, mystery, animality and naturalness are the words which Lawrence thinks are important for human beings' rebirth. So among mountains

She was not sure that she had not heard, during the night, a great crash at the centre of herself, which was the crash of her own death. Or else it was a crash at the centre of the earth, and meant something big and

mysterious. (GSNS 762)

She suffers from the changes in herself and her change is the same as the earth's change. Here Lawrence seems to be saying that if each person changes, the world can be changed.

3. The woman's spontaneity and abandonment of will

The woman was desperate in the civilization of white people but she did not kill herself. While climbing up steep mountains she sometimes feel scared but again she does not kill herself. Why? Because she wants rebirth, seeking a New God which is the Indians' God. So the theme of this short story is religious.

"Does the white woman seek the gods of the Chilchui because she is weary of her own God?" came the question.

"Yes, she does. She is tired of the white man's God," she replied, thinking that was what they wanted her to say. She would like the gods of the Chilchui.(GSNS 769)

Lawrence is always exploring and in *Kangaroo* he advocates the Dark God I researched in my book *The Novels of D.H. Lawrence: a Study of the Dark God*. This theme reaches the climax in *The Plumed Serpent*. The most important characteristic of the Dark God is that it is the god of sexual love. Lawrence has original idea about sexual love. It requires a balance between man and woman, and that love has connections with cosmic forces. The ceremony of the sacrifice of the white woman is also sexual and cosmic. It connects fire(the sun) and water(the moon). Lawrence deplores that the modern civilized white world has

lost the relationship with the cosmos. So we must get back it, Lawrence thinks. The Indians give her some drink and she feels the moving of the world's going. She is changing and accepting metamorphosis as Juliet in 'Sun' gets metamorphosis, having intercourse with the pagan sun in Italy.

And presently she began to be sick, and to vomit violently, as if she had no control over herself.

Afterwards she felt a great soothing languor steal over her, her limbs felt strong and full of languor, and she lay on her couch listening to the sounds of the village, watching the yellowing sky, smelling the scent of burning cedar-wood, or pine-wood. So distinctly she heard the yapping of tiny dogs, the shuffle of far-off feet, the murmur of voices, so keenly she detected the smell of smoke, and flowers, and evening falling, so vividly she swathe one bright star infinitely remote, stirring above the sunset, that she felt as if all her senses were diffused on the air, (*GSNS* 774)

All of her senses have become tremendously keen. She is very, very natural. And she can hear the cosmic music "as if the moisture ascending and the moisture descending in the air resounded like some harp in the cosmos." (*GSNS* 774) She is becoming one of the winds, so she need not fear her death.

Like Aaron who left his home intuitively and wandered about seeking his leading man, the woman who rode away went into the mysterious mountains spontaneously. The life with her husband had reached a dead end from which she wanted to escape. So her going out seemed natural. And her offering herself to the Indian's God is natural, too. It is salvation for her.

Her kind of womanhood, intensely personal and individual, was to

be obliterated again, and the great primeval symbols were to tower once more over the fallen individual independence of woman. The sharpness and the quivering nervous consciousness of the highly-bred white woman was to be destroyed again, womanhood was to be cast once more into the great stream of impersonal sex and passion. Strangely, as if clairvoyant, she saw the immense sacrifice prepared. And she went back to her little house in a trance of agony.(*GSNS* 777)

The narrator, Lawrence, emphasizes the woman's abandonment of personality and individuality which means her will because will is at the exact opposite of spontaneity or animality. He writes about individuality in his essay 'The Individual Consciousness V The Social Consciousness':

Paradoxical as it may sound, the individual is only truly himself when he is unconscious of his own individuality, when he is unaware of his own isolation, when he is not split into subjective and objective, when there is no me or you, no me or it in his consciousness.(*Ph* 761)

The woman was self-conscious and so her nerve went wrong. But in the village of the Indians she was beginning to lose her self-consciousness, and she could hear natural things and feel them and see them more keenly or clearly. The woman in the white world was controlled by her husband's will and thus lost spontaneity and naturalness. As a result she became unhappy. But in the Indian's world she has been becoming spontaneous, and so she has become one of the natural things. As she is not perfectly one of the natural things, she sometimes feels fear of the coming ceremony of sacrifice, but finally it is "trance" which she finds. And having drunk the sweetened herb drink, she feels "as if she were

diffusing out deliciously into the harmony of things." (GSNS 779) Besides "she could actually hear the great stars in heaven," and "saw through her door, speaking from their motion and saying things perfectly to the cosmos, as they trod in ripples, like bells on the floor of heaven, passing one another grouping in the timeless dance." (GSNS 781) She can experience this intercourse with the cosmos as "she lived on, in a kind of daze, feeling her power ebbing more and more away from her, as if her will were leaving her." (GSNS 779) When "her ordinary personal consciousness had left her" and "had gone into that other state of passional cosmic consciousness" she is to be offered as a victim. And she wants that to happen.

Conclusion

Lawrence depicts the woman who rode away as a victim of the Indian's God. But his purpose is to rescue people who live in the white civilization. *The Woman Who Rode Away* is written as symbolically, so it should not be read as a realistic short novel, but as a kind of fable as some critics say. The last sentence of the story "Then the old man would strike, and strike home, accomplish sacrifice and achieve the power." (GSNS 788) shows it is in the nature of a fable because it is written in the subjunctive mood. Lawrence wants balance between the opposite things, especially between man and woman. He thinks human beings' will destroys the balanced relationship between them. And also the white man's will has made mechanical civilization but this has now reached a cul-de-sac. Lawrence thinks, now, it is necessary to get back to spontaneity, leaving will behind, and he seeks the solution in pagan gods. In *The Woman Who Rode Away*, the pagan gods are depicted as the Indian's God because the

Indians live a natural life, being depicted like animals and having intercourse with nature.

Works Cited

Lawrence, D. H. 'The Individual Consciousness V. The Social Consciousness' in *Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D.H. Lawrence* ed. By E.D. McDonald. London: Heinemann, 1936. (略号 Ph)

Lawrence, D.H. *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence* Volume I 1901-13. Ed. By James T. Boulton 1979. The Cambridge Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979. (略号 Letters I)

Lawrence, D.H. *The Woman Who Rode Away* in *The Great Short Novels and Stories of D.H. Lawrence* London: Robinson Publishing, 1989 (略号 GSNS)

Lawrence, D.H. *Women in Love*. The Cambridge Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. (略号 WL)

Cowan, James. *D.H. Lawrence's American Journey: A Study in Literature and Myth*. Cleveland /London: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1970.

Millett, Kate. 'D.H. Lawrence (*Lady Chatterley's Lover*, *The Plumed Serpent*,

‘*The Woman Who Rode Away*’) in Widdowson, P. ed.
D.H. Lawrence. London and New York: Longman, 1992.

Simpson J.A. & Weiner E.S.C.Pre: *The Oxford English Dictionary* Second
Edition Volume VII & X. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989,
1991, 1998.

Steven, Laurence. “‘The Woman Who Rode Away’: D.H. Lawrence’s
Cul-De-Sac’ in Ellis, David and Ornella DeZordo. *D.H.
Lawrence: Critical Assessment* Vol.III, East Sussex:
Helm Information, 1992.

